DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH



COUNTY OF SAN BERNARDINO

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EASTER EGG FOOD SAFETY

San Bernardino: If you and your family celebrate Easter by hunting for Easter eggs, you should practice some simple food safety steps. Safe food handling and storage are important to keep your loved ones safe.

Before and after handling eggs, it is important to wash your hands and your work area thoroughly. Always wash your hands with soap and warm water for 20 seconds before beginning food preparation and at every step of preparing Easter eggs (cooking, cooling and dyeing). Fully cook the eggs until they are hard-boiled to kill potentially harmful bacteria such as *Salmonella*.

Make sure the eggs you color do not have any cracks. If any eggs crack during cooking or dyeing, throw them away. Be sure to refrigerate eggs within two hours after cooking and decorating them. Check your refrigerator temperature to make sure it is set to hold food at 41°F or below.

Use food-grade dye if you plan to eat the decorated Easter eggs. You may want to consider making two sets of eggs, one for decorating and hiding and another for eating. Keep cooked eggs chilled in the refrigerator until just before the hunt. Hide eggs in places that are protected from dirt, pets, and other bacteria sources. While hunting for Easter eggs, try to avoid cracking the egg shells. If the shells crack, bacteria could enter and contaminate the egg inside. The total time for hiding and hunting for eggs should be no more than two hours. Be sure to refrigerate the "found" eggs right away until you eat them. Eggs found hours later or the next day should not be eaten. Throw them away!

For more information, contact the County of San Bernardino, Department of Public Health, Division of Environmental Health Services at 1-800-442-2283 or visit our website at www.sbcounty.gov/dehs.

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